PART V POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR THE APPROVAL OF NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMS IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN COLORADO OPERATING UNDER A PERFORMANCE CONTRACT*

1.00 Introduction

The public higher education system in Colorado is intended to provide access to degree programs, specifically broad geographic access to undergraduate programs, access to master's degree programs based on market demand, and unique access to doctoral degree programs. No new degree program may be implemented at a state postsecondary institution unless the proposal is approved by the appropriate governing board and reviewed by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education. The Commission's role is limited to evaluation of a proposed program's fit with an institution's role and mission. A new degree program may not be implemented without Commission determination that it is consistent with the institution's role and mission. This program approval policy and set of procedures applies to Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Associate of General Studies, baccalaureate and graduate degree programs.

2.00 Statutory Authority

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education's role and responsibility in the approval of new academic programs at institutions operating under a performance contract is defined in SB 04-189. It reads:

While operating pursuant to a performance contract negotiated pursuant to this section, the governing board of a state institution of higher education: Need not consult with nor obtain approval from the Colorado commission on higher education to create, modify, or eliminate academic and vocational programs offered by the institution, so long as such creations, modifications, and eliminations are consistent with the institution's statutory role and mission. The Colorado commission on higher education shall have the authority to override any creation or modification of an academic or vocational program if the change made by the governing board is inconsistent with the institution's statutory role and mission. $(23-5-129\ (6)(b))$

* For public colleges and universities not operating under a performance contract, program approval follows the CCHE policy on approval of new academic programs adopted by the Commission at its June 2003 meeting.

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3.00 Policy Goal

The goal of CCHE's approval policy for academic degree programs at institutions operating pursuant to a performance contract is to ensure that a new or substantially modified degree program is consistent with the statutory role and mission of the institution.

4.00 Process and Procedures

The academic degree approval process includes:

- Governing board approval.
- Review by the Commission of proposed program's fit with institution's role and mission.
- Post-approval review as specified in performance contracts.

1. Governing Board Approval

- a. A governing board may act to approve a new degree program before or after Commission endorsement of the program's fit with the institution's role and mission.
- b. The governing board shall formally notify the Commission of its approval of a new degree program immediately following board action.

2. Review by the Commission of Role and Mission

- a. Upon receipt of the notification of the governing action, CCHE reviews the program for fit with the institution's role and mission, and responds to the governing board within 30 days of receiving the proposal.
- b. If CCHE determines that the proposed program is consistent with an institution's statutory role and mission, it shall assign a CIP code to the program, place the program on CCHE's list of approved degree program list, and, in writing, inform the governing board. The program may be implemented anytime after this notification is received.
- c. If CCHE determines that the proposal is not consistent with the institution's role and mission, it will so inform the governing board.
- d. No new degree can be implemented without CCHE determination that the program is consistent with the institution's role and mission.

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<u>Note</u>: While not required to do so, an institution or governing board may request the Commission to review a proposed academic program's fit with the institution's role and mission prior to being considered by the governing board. CCHE will respond within 30 days of receiving the proposal.

If CCHE determines that the proposed program is consistent with an institution's statutory role and mission, it shall so inform the institution and no further consideration of that issue will be made by the Commission.

If CCHE determines that the proposal is not consistent with the institution's role and mission, it will, discuss the matter with governing board staff and, if requested to do so, communicate the concern in writing to the requesting governing board.

3. Changes to existing approved programs

Following institutional and/or governing board approval, proposals that involve modifying the academic scope of a degree program, consolidation of programs, or renaming a degree program must be reported to CCHE for appropriate entry in the list of approved programs.

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